

Eating with Indigenous Troops

- Embedded U.S. forces may be required to eat with local armies.
- The practice can create significant bonding and morale benefits
- Soldiers must recognize the health risks and the steps to minimize these risks



Eating with Indigenous Troops

POSITIVE

- Improved morale of both US and host nation forces
- Improved working relationship & trust
- U.S. Forces learn local customs

NEGATIVE

- Increased risk of food-borne illness; diarrhea, parasitic infections
- Potential for lost duty days or degraded performance
- Increased risk enemy forces could intentionally contaminate food

Eating with Indigenous Troops

- **Countermeasures**

- **Food**

- Limit consumption to these relatively safe foods:

- **Beans and Rice**
 - **Hard skin fruits and vegetables that are peeled**
 - **Hard crusted breads (should be sliced at table)**
 - **Flat bread**
 - **Eat only fully cooked rice, vegetables, and meat served hot (above 140 degrees F)**

- **Handwashing**

Eating with Indigenous Troops

- **Countermeasures**

- **Food**

- Avoid the following high risk foods:
 - **Local dairy products (milk, cheese)**
 - **Lamb, beef, and goat**
 - **Fish and chicken that are not boiled**
 - **Leafy vegetables**
 - **Local pastries**
 - **Rare or uncooked meats, fish, poultry, and vegetables**
 - **Cooked foods eaten cold**
 - **Leftovers**

Eating with Indigenous Troops

- **Countermeasures**

- **Beverages**

- Limit consumption to relatively safe drinks:
 - **Boil or filter all water to 1 micron or finer**
 - **Drink only boiled or filtered bottled water**
 - **Canned or bottled carbonated drinks**
 - **Make sure the cap/seal of a bottle is broken in your presence**
 - **Make sure ice is made from boiled or chlorinated water**

Eating with Indigenous Troops

- **Countermeasures**

- **Beverages**

- Avoid the following high risk drinks:
 - **Local vendor ice (especially from street vendors)**
 - **Open beverages of any type**
 - **Dairy products including ice cream products**
 - **Sweet fruit juices**

Eating with Indigenous Troops

- **Training**

- **US Military Medical Support**

- Use mealtime and meal preparation as training opportunities for indigenous troops. Training should include:
 - **Hand washing while handling food and before eating**
 - **Selection of the best foods**
 - **Recognition of contaminated meats**
 - **Washing fresh fruits and vegetables before cooking**
 - **Safe holding temperatures (Cold = <40F; Hot = >140F)**
 - **Thorough cooking to a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees F**

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- **Other Countermeasures**
 - **Anti-acid tablets; anti-diarrhea medications**
 - **Acidophilus tablets after long periods of diarrhea (helps to repopulate the intestine with healthy bacteria)**
 - **Provide approved bottled drinking water as a gift to the host**

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